

Service Animal Law Signed by Governor



Image © <http://www.pawsitivelyservicedogs.com>

Governor Mary Fallin signed House Bill 3282, authorizing landlords to require tenants to provide documentation of disability when requesting service or assistance animal accommodations. The bill goes into effect November 1.

A person with a disability may submit a request to their landlord for a reasonable accommodation to keep an assistance animal in a rental unit.

Key points of the law are:

- Landlords may request supporting documentation to verify the tenant meets the Fair Housing Act definition of a person with a disability.
- Landlords may request documentation that describes the accommodation needed.
- The landlord may require documentation that shows the relationship between the person's disability and the need for the requested accommodation.
- The landlord may now independently verify the authenticity of supporting documentation submitted.
- The landlord is not liable for injuries caused by the assistance animal permitted on the landlord's property as a reasonable accommodation.
- A person making a false claim is subject to legal action by the landlord.



News on 8

A Newsletter for Section 8 Rental Assistance Landlords and Tenants
Published Twice Yearly by Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency



AssistanceCheck.com Portal Available

Earlier this year, OHFA rolled out a new online portal called AssistanceCheck.

Currently available to Housing Choice Voucher applicants and property owners, users can sign in to accomplish common tasks and to request information.

Current tenants will be enrolled into AssistanceCheck during future recertification appointments.

With this new secure service, customers can contact OHFA at any time, rather than coming into the office or contacting OHFA by phone.

Waiting list applicants may edit contact information, view and print documents and view waiting list status.

Property owners may review payments, request to reschedule inspections and review inspection

information.

Once available to tenants, they will be able to request to update income, adjust family status and add family members.

"We expect this to help our customers tremendously," said Tim Shackelford, director of rental programs.

Shackelford said the portal will be available for access at all hours, allowing customers to conduct business at a schedule most convenient to them.

"Instead of wondering if paperwork has reached us, our customers will be able to see the documents within their particular file."

A user name and password is required to log into AssistanceCheck.

Instructional videos for using AssistanceCheck may be viewed on OHFA's website, www.ohfa.org.



Contact List

TTY (405) 848-7471

Recertification Team 1 (405) 419-8166
Alphabet A,D,G,H,K,M,O, and X Fax: (405) 419-9166

Recertification Team 2 (405) 419-8167
Alphabet B,C,I,J,N,P,T,U, and Y Fax: (405) 419-9167

Recertification Team 3 (405) 419-8168
Alphabet E,F,L,Q,R,S,V,W, and Z Fax: (405) 419-9168

Initial Certification Team (405) 419-8169
Fax: (405) 419-9169

Preapp Status line 1-866-569-6306
or (405) 879-6365

Local Leasing line (405) 842-2471
Toll-free Leasing line 1-800-256-1489
Fax Number (405) 879-8822

Office Operations
Mary Hoock, Manager (405) 419-8266
Ken Erb, Supervisor (405) 419-8233

Field Operations
Kenneth Love, Manager (405) 419-8268
Dodie Pool, Supervisor (405) 419-8230

FSS/ Home Ownership Specialists
Lanisha Hines (405) 419-8236
Ryland Moore (405) 419-8197
Emmy Hise-Doran (405) 419-8171

Project Based Contract Administration (405) 419-8181
(PBCA) (405) 419-8104
Rhonda Watson

OHFA's Administrative Plan for the Section 8 Housing Voucher Program may be viewed at www.ohfa.org or at its central office by appointment.

Street Address: 100 N.W. 63rd Street, Suite 200
Oklahoma City, OK 73116

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 26720
Oklahoma City, OK 73126

Executive Director

Deborah Jenkins

Deputy Executive Director

Kurt Fite

Rental Programs Director

Tim Shackelford

NEWS on 8 Editor/Communications Director

Holley Mangham, APR

AA/EEO

www.ohfa.org

Spread the Word...

Many Farmers Markets now accept SNAP Benefits!



Supplemental
Nutrition
Assistance
Program



= \$1



State's Farmers Markets Accept SNAP Benefits

Now that the Oklahoma weather is getting warmer, farmers markets are popping up all over the state.

These markets offer fresh, local produce grown by Oklahoma farmers and ranchers.

Items offered often include fruits, vegetables, meats, eggs, herbs, honey and dairy products.

The Oklahoma Nutrition Information & Education (ONIE) Project has coordinated with Oklahoma markets so that they can accept SNAP benefits, with

some participating in the Double Up Oklahoma program.

Double Up Oklahoma doubles the value (up to \$20 per day) of SNAP benefits spent at participating farmers markets, helping people bring home locally grown fruits and vegetables.

The ONIE Project also offers seasonal recipes and tips for healthier nutrition at www.onieproject.org/recipes.

For a full listing of farmers markets accepting SNAP benefits, visit www.onieproject.org/farmersmarkets.

Stop Buggin'

Control Pests with Integrated Pest Management

Common pests can cause serious health problems. Pests such as cockroaches and rodents, and the chemicals used to control them, can cause and trigger allergies and asthma by contaminating the air indoors.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a method that focuses on knowing the pest in order to prevent pests from getting out of control. IPM is safer because non-chemical methods are the first line of defense. If chemicals must be used, always choose less hazardous products. Be sure to read warning labels before using any chemical products.

All pests look for food, water and shelter. To prevent pests, take these items away from them by doing the following:

- Keep living areas clean and uncluttered.
- Put food in tightly sealed containers.

- Keep trash in a closed container.
- Fix plumbing or water leaks.
- Seal entry points such as gaps in walls, pipes, pavement and other surfaces using caulking, steel wool, or other pest-proof materials.

When eliminating pests, use traps and baits first, along with a less-toxic dust such as boric acid.

- Put the bait close to the pest's hiding place.
- Do not spray any pesticides. This will keep the pests away from the bait.
- Choose and use chemicals very carefully.
- Read the label - it has valuable information on proper use.

Adapted from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control

OHFA Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance Makes Home Buying a Possible Option for Oklahomans

If buying a home has ever been on your bucket list, consider checking into the OHFA Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance Program.

Managed separately from the Housing Choice Voucher Program, OHFA's

Downpayment Assistance Program has helped more than 50,000 families become homeowners since 1980.

"Without OHFA's downpayment assistance, I would not have been able to buy a home," said Erik, a recent homebuyer.

Key Features

- Homes may be purchased in any of Oklahoma's 77 counties. Income limits

vary depending on location.

- All loans are limited to 30-year fixed rate mortgages.
- Homebuyers must have a minimum credit score of 640.
- Maximum household income varies by county and family size.

- Approved lenders can determine if your income meets requirements for OHFA Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance.

- OHFA will provide 3.5% or

5% of the loan amount towards the downpayment for the purchase of your home.

- In addition to Downpayment Assistance, qualified buyers may also use the Freddie Mac Home Possible

product which offers up to \$2,500 toward closing costs.

- Downpayment assistance is a gift, meaning no repayment is required.

OHFA's network of lenders can help get the process of moving from renter to homebuyer started.

A full listing of lenders, income and purchase price limits can be found at www.ohfadownpayment.org.

For more information, call (405) 419-8207.



Sooner Stand Down Needs Landlords Interested in Renting to Homeless Vets

Oklahoma County landlords interested in renting units to homeless veterans and their families are invited to support this year's Sooner Stand Down for Homeless Veterans, September 7.

Held at the Homeless Alliance, the annual Sooner Stand Down is a collaboration among human service organizations and the Oklahoma Veterans Affairs Health Care System to help the homeless and disadvantaged veteran population.

According to the Point-in-Time count coordinated by the Homeless Alliance in 2017, 1,388 individuals were experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City. Of those, 11% identified themselves as veterans.

In 2017, OHFA partnered with two landlords to identify and prepare units to be rented on the day of the Stand Down. The partnership enabled seven



homeless veterans and their families to be housed last year.

Even more families are expected at this year's event.

To participate, please contact Kenneth Love, Field Operations Manager, (405) 419-8268 or Dodie Pool, Field Operations Supervisor at (405) 419-8230 for details.

Changes to Phone Number, Email & Mailing Address

Immediately notify OHFA in writing every time your telephone number, email or mailing address changes.

Housing Assistance Payments

Report concerns or questions regarding rental assistance payments to (405) 848-1144, Ext. 2898. Leave a detailed message and a phone number where you can be reached.

Housing Assistance Payment History

Property owners may access payment history 24/7 at www.assistancecheck.com.

Available Rental Properties

Visit <http://ohfa.gosection8.com> to view or list available units for free or call (866) 466-7328.

Field Agents

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Luke Brooks
<i>East Oklahoma</i> | • Debbie Mauldin
<i>Floater Agent</i> |
| • Jack Howell
<i>East Oklahoma</i> | • Christina Nittler
<i>Floater Agent</i> |
| • Philippe Jamet
<i>Floater Agent</i> | • Shannon Ogle
<i>SE Oklahoma</i> |
| • Keneshia Kelley
<i>NE Oklahoma</i> | • Shawnta Ward
<i>Floater Agent</i> |
| • Corey King
<i>Floater Agent</i> | • Judi Wright
<i>Floater Agent</i> |
| • Rhonda Murrell
<i>Floater Agent</i> | |

Holidays

May 28 - Memorial Day
July 4 - Independence Day
September 3 - Labor Day
November 12 - Veterans Day
November 22 & 23 - Thanksgiving

**Family Self-Sufficiency
Program Coordinating Committee**
July 19 and October 18

Resident Advisory Board Meeting
August 23 and November 8

Landlord Meetings
October 10 - Lawton
October 23 - Tulsa
November 7 - Oklahoma City

OHFA Staff Training
June 14
September 13



A Newsletter for Section 8 Rental Assistance Landlords and Tenants
Published Twice Yearly by Oklahoma Housing Finance Agency

SEE WHAT'S INSIDE!



AssistanceCheck.com
portal provides 24/7
access.



Governor signs service
animal legislation.



Bugs be gone - safely
manage summer pests.



Downpayment assistance
offered to homebuyers.

P.O. Box 26720
Oklahoma City, OK 73126
www.ohfa.org

Presort Standard
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No 777
Okla. City, OK



**The Housing Choice
Voucher waiting list
has reopened. Apply
at www.ohfa.org.**

Friendly Reminders: Family & Owner Obligations

Violating a family obligation is the greatest cause of participants losing their assistance.

Family obligations:

- Supply any information that OHFA or HUD determines to be necessary including evidence of citizenship or eligible immigration status, and information for all family members and their income.
- Supply any information requested by OHFA to verify that the family is living in the unit. This also includes information related to a family absence from the unit.
- Notify OHFA and the owner in writing before moving out of the unit or terminating the lease.
- Obtain OHFA approval before allowing any new household member to occupy the unit. This does not include additions resulting from birth, adop-

tion, or court awarded custody of a child. These must be reported in writing at the next annual recertification.

- Notify OHFA in writing within 30 days if any household member moves.
- Give OHFA a copy of any owner eviction notice.
- Pay utility bills and supply appliances that the owner is not required to supply under the lease.
- Tenants must meet with field agents for scheduled appointments.
- The unit must be the family's only residence.

The family must not:

- Commit any serious or repeated violations of the lease.
- Commit fraud, bribery, or any other corrupt or criminal act in connection with the program.
- Participate in illegal drug or violent criminal activity.

Owners have important obligations that include the following:

- Comply with fair housing laws and HUD regulations.
- Do not discriminate.
- Enforce the lease and collect the rent due from the family.
- Comply with the terms of the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract.
- Ensure the unit continues to meet Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection requirements.
- Cooperate with the family and OHFA by responding promptly to requests for needed repairs.
- Notify OHFA of any known violations.
- Screen applicants for suitability as renters.